

NURSING EDUCATION IN WASHINGTON STATE



Overview of the nursing education system in Washington State

- 39 nursing programs are approved by the Nursing Care Quality Assurance Commission.
- Program expansion in recent years has been substantial: graduates of RN programs have nearly doubled since 2001. However, prospects for further expansion were limited even before the recent economic crisis due to shortages of faculty and clinical sites.
- Program types in community and technical colleges:
 - 3 colleges offer only practical nursing (LPN) programs.
 - 8 colleges offer only associate degree RN programs.
 - 20 colleges offer both LPN and associate degree RN (ADN) programs.
- 8 universities offer baccalaureate (BSN) and higher degree programs:
 - 2 are public (University of Washington and Washington State University)
 - 5 are independent (Northwestern University, Pacific Lutheran University, Seattle University, Seattle Pacific University, and Walla Walla University)
- The 5 independent universities graduate about half of the state's generic (pre-licensure) BSN nurses.
- 3 of the universities also offer "master's entry" RN programs, for students with a non-nursing baccalaureate degree who wish to obtain a RN and a Master's in nursing.
- The University of Washington in Seattle and Washington State University in Spokane have PhD in nursing programs.
- UW recently converted many of its master's programs to DNP programs (Doctor of Nursing Practice). WSU has planned to begin a DNP program as well, although that program change is currently on hold.
- Many of the state's educational resources are concentrated in the western part of the state, especially in the Puget Sound/ I-5 corridor. Rural access is quite limited in some areas but the Rural Outreach Nursing Education program is beginning to address that issue.

Source: Nursing Care Quality Assurance Commission (2009). *Nursing education programs 2007-2008 annual school report: Statistics summary and trends analysis.* Olympia, WA: Department of Health.

Graduates by program type (2008)

- LPN: 718
- ADN: 1605
- BSN: 809 (pre-licensure)

- RN-BSN: 290 (post-licensure)
- Master's
 - ARNP 171
 - Other 135
- PhD (nursing) 18